

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Position Description

Classification: Microbiologist- Advanced

Working Title: Fish Health Microbiologist

Work Location: Bureau of Fisheries Management, DNR Science Operations Center, 2801 Progress Rd., Madison, Wisconsin

Position Summary:

Provide fish health program services in coordination with the Fish Health Professional to the Fisheries Management program under the direction of the Fish Culture Section Chief which includes staff at state fish hatcheries, rearing stations, coop ponds and spawning weirs; district operations and district offices. This position is responsible for assuring that DNR meets DATCP (Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection) fish health standards for stocking, transfer and importation of fish. These standards are set by the DATCP Administrative Codes. Meeting DATCP standards and rules will entail conducting fish health inspections at state fish hatcheries, DNR outlying rearing areas, cooperative rearing facilities and spawning weirs; issuing fish health certificates (FHCs) for fish reared at DNR facilities prior to stocking as well as for wild fish transfers when allowed, analyzing bacteriological samples, developing protocols to minimize the need to send samples to other labs for analysis, and maintaining fish health records including systems to store and retrieve records easily. Additionally, this position will be responsible for maintaining the laboratory and field equipment in good working order, managing investigational new animal drug permits, the wild bait harvest permit system and report writing related to budgeting and grants.

Geographic Scope and Travel Requirements:

The fish health program is a function within the Bureau of Fisheries Management with statewide responsibilities. Significant travel throughout the state will be required; long days and some overnight travel will be necessary. This position will be stationed in Madison, Wisconsin, at the DNR Science Operations Center and will be required to attend staff meetings at the Central Office (GEF 2, 101 Webster Street, Madison) at least once a week. The position will be required to work one day every pay period in Central office to facilitate collaboration with the Section Chief and Fish Production Manager. The position will have full access to the fish health lab in the DNR Science Operations Center. This position will be supervised by the Fish Culture Section Chief and is expected to work without day to day supervision, but collaboratively with other fish health professionals and Fisheries Bureau Staff.

Scope of Authority:

This position reports to the Chief of the Fish Culture Section and works in conjunction with the Fish Health Professional to provide fish health services statewide to hatchery and fisheries management staff. This position may direct the day to day activities of up to two LTES.

Responsibilities and Accountabilities:

45% A. Assist in the compliance of all WDNR fisheries programs with applicable state and federal fish health regulations.

A1. Conduct fish health inspections that generate Fish Health Certificates for all WI State Fish Hatcheries or cooperator facilities. May work with The Fish Health Professional, LTES, contractors, or other state or federal agencies as needed to generate Fish Health Certificates; Supervises collection of fish from rearing units, prepares equipment and preforms fish necropsies in laboratory and field setting to collect samples and reports on the presence or absence of a disease condition of fish specimens, reports results of inspection and sample results by creating Fish Health Certificate. Prepares and analyses microbiological samples in the laboratory with available equipment or prepares and sends microbiological samples to other labs for further analysis on an as needed basis. 30%

A2. Maintain all fish health records required by DNR and DATCP, and complete all required annual or semi-annual reporting; Produces Fish Health Certificates and distributes them to DATCP, Fish Hatchery Managers and other Fisheries Staff to comply with ATCP regulations related to the stocking of fish. Organizes and maintains records in compliance with ATCP administrative code. Reports findings to Fish Hatchery Staff and recommends husbandry changes to improve fish health. 10%

A3. Develop and maintain an electronic records storage systems to facilitate report writing and the production of needed documents. Work with Fish Database staff to develop a system to store records electronically within the Fisheries Database, develop automated reports based on stored records to facilitate report writing. 5%

- 30% B. Implement, improve, and maintain, in collaboration with the fish health professional, hatchery staff, and other fisheries program staff, a program to provide needed fish health services to the fisheries program, at the following locations: state fish hatcheries, cooperative rearing facilities, outlying rearing areas and spawning weirs.
- B1. Conduct annual fish health inspections and assist with veterinary health assessments in the field or laboratory setting. Prepares for inspections and assessments by assembling appropriate equipment, directs the collection of fish for necropsy, collects samples and makes observations related to fish health and husbandry, prepares and analyses microbiological samples. 20%
 - B2. Participate in the annual fish propagation planning meeting and other fish culture meetings as needed to facilitate the stocking of fish statewide. Discusses inspection needs related to timing for stocking and transfer of fish to waters of the state or between facilities for further rearing. Brings new fish health information to the program and disseminates it to all staff. 5%
 - B3. Coordinate the use of investigational new animal drugs to assist in the rearing of fish at Department facilities. Surveys Fisheries Management staff for INAD needs. Develop and orders needed drugs and distributes them to fisheries staff. Assures reporting is completed with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to maintain good standing. 5%
- 10% C. Maintain, improve and implement a program to provide needed fish health services related to wild fish.
- C1. Responds to reports of fish kills by having protocols, equipment, and supplies available to sample fish populations that are experiencing significant mortality in the wild. 2%
 - C2. Performs a visual inspection for the presence or absence of disease on wild fish populations and records findings while working in a laboratory or field setting. Performs fish necropsies for microbiological sample collection and analyses samples for known disease causing organisms and records findings. 3%
 - C3. Prepares written reports and transmits findings to all Fisheries Management staff. Makes appropriate recommendations to protect wild fish populations statewide to the Fisheries Management Policy Team. 3%
 - C4. Conduct fish health inspections on feral/wild fish populations for purposes of field transfers, or as requested by fisheries biologists. 2%

- 5% D. Provide accurate fish health information and advice the Fish Culture Section and Fisheries Management program on technical issues.
- D1. Provide fish health perspective on exotic invasive species, boat and gear disinfection, and other topics as needed. 1%
 - D2. Provide technical expertise regarding fish health to district and central office Fisheries Management staff and administrators. 2%
 - D3. Participate in the American Fisheries Society - Fish Health Section, or other professional group as time and interest allow. 1%
 - D4. Maintain required professional certification(s) and/or accreditation(s) 1%
- 5% E. Participate on a team to complete the team's charge or other assignments, as assigned by either the Bureau Director or the Fish Culture Section Chief
- E1. Participate on Teams as assigned by the FM Policy Team or Fish Culture Section Chief. 3%
 - E2. Assist the Bureau of Fisheries Management with assignments as directed by the Fish Culture Section Chief or Bureau Director or Assistant Bureau Director. 2%
- 5% F. Maintains organizational responsiveness by completing the following tasks when assigned
- F1. Review and keep abreast of changes in knowledge and practices of position-related activities in responsibilities. 1%
 - F2. Participate in job-related training and organizational meetings as assigned by supervisor. 1%
 - F3. Prepare forms and reports as necessary for personnel and budget accounting purposes in a timely manner. 1%
 - F4. Perform other position-related duties as assigned. 1%
 - F5. Follow all general and position-related safety requirements. 1%

Knowledge Skills and Abilities

Knowledge of the organization's products and services and can articulate their value

Knowledge of the principles of fish health, fish biology, animal husbandry, fish propagation, bacteriology, virology, parasitology, and fish ecology

Skill in maintaining a friendly and helpful demeanor with customers through busy cycles and repetitive needs and questions

Skill in explaining complex items or processes in simple terms for the customer.

Skill to employ analytical abilities, pragmatism, and other tools to resolve complex problems in a variety of situations.

Skill to understand a complex situation, issue, or problem by breaking it down into smaller pieces and traces implications or consequences.

Skill in effective decision making, such as making timely, well-reasoned decisions by integrating information and perspectives from colleagues.

Skill in Calculating and evaluating the long-term consequences of decisions.

Skill in making fair decisions on clearly based objective criteria rather than personalities.

Skill in Effective Communication, such as clearly conveying and receiving information and ideas through a variety of media to and from individuals or groups in a manner that engages and helps them understand and retain the message.

Skill in translating complex and technical information or processes to lay audience/customers.

Skill in dealing with sensitive issues and personalities and is aware of own impact.

Skill in using basic computer programs: word processing, spreadsheets, database, and presentations

Ability to work well independently and is self-motivated to take action to meet critical organizational/program/unit goals.

Ability to set and monitor their own objectives and standards.

Ability to initiates appropriate actions and follows through without prompting or close supervision.

Ability to delivers accurate and technically proficient work.

Ability to demonstrate sound professional judgment in analyses and decisions.

Ability to shows enthusiasm for technical and intellectually complex tasks and solving problems.

Ability to develop and sustain stakeholder relationships and partnerships

Knowledge Skills and Abilities Continued

Ability to build and effectively utilize relationships and influences informal networks to achieve goals.

Ability to share knowledge and build trust with colleagues, superiors and employees. Is discreet when situation demands.

Ability to work through complex situations effectively, diplomatically and with sensitivity without losing credibility or trust.

Ability to recognize sensitive information and keep it confidential.

Ability to build systems and discipline that democratizes information, and, as necessary, removes control and privilege around information.

Ability to promote and influence others' thinking regarding the organization's standards and positions.

Physical Requirements and Environmental Factors

Strength requirements:

The position requires handling (lifting) fish ranging in size from fry to 30+ pounds while assisting fisheries staff with fish collection at hatcheries, electrofishing, and at spawning weirs. Work often requires concentrated attention for several hours while necropsying fish for health inspections. Often the workday extends longer than 8 hours and includes driving long distances to the work site.

Environmental Factors:

Work may be conducted in inclement weather, including rain, snow, excessively warm or cold air temperatures. Appropriate rain gear/waders are provided as part of the job. The incumbent may be exposed to serious fish pathogens that may cause zoonotic diseases. The incumbent is expected to implement precautions to prevent self-injury and transmission of fish pathogens (protective gear such as gloves, eye protection, use of an autoclave to sterilize equipment, proper disposal of fish after necropsy, etc.) There may be exposure to hazardous chemicals such as formalin, glutaraldehyde, ethanol, thiamine HCl, buffers, methanol, or others. The incumbent will be expected to read the MSDS sheets before using these chemicals and take appropriate precautions to prevent self-injury. Safety gear is provided by the Department. The incumbent is expected to continuously implement safe work habits.

Equipment Used: DNR vehicles (cars, trucks, minivans, boats depending on the assignment); necropsy instruments; compound and dissecting microscopes; balances; chemical hood; autoclave; digital camera; ultra-low temperature freezer; walk-in freezer; saturometer; D.O. meter; pH meter, centrifuges; hematocrit readers; personal computers.

Telework Evaluation:

This position is not available for telework due the extensive travel and need for laboratory facilities to complete work tasks.

Special Requirements:

This position shall within 6 months of appointment meet DATCP requirements for a Qualified Fish Health Inspector capable of issuing a FHC detailed in ATCP 10.67. Relevant sections relating to the definition of a Qualified Fish Health Inspector are listed here:

ATCP 10.67 Fish Health Inspectors and Laboratories

(1) Qualified Fish Health Inspectors

(a) The following individuals are Qualified Fish Health Inspectors, for purposes of this subchapter, unless disqualified under par. (b):

1. A Wisconsin certified veterinarian who has completed a fish health inspection training program approved by the department (DATCP).
3. An individual who is currently certified by the American Fisheries Society as a Fish Health Inspector or Fish Pathologist, and who has completed a fish health inspection training approved by the department (DATCCP).
4. An individual who is currently authorized by a state to conduct official fish health inspections in that state, and who has completed a fish health inspection training approved by the department (DATCP).

Department Competencies (Department Performance Objectives):

Safety: Ensures a culture of safety within the work unit. Demonstrate responsibility for the safety and health of employees. Monitor effectiveness and ideas for improvement. Ensures that staff is provided safety information and training, and for insures that all operations are performed with the utmost regard for the safety and health.

Decision Making: Able to analyze situations fully and accurately to reach productive decisions. Consults appropriate parties when necessary and identifies the key concerns and/or issues that need to be addressed in order to make the best decision possible, at the correct level of decision hierarchy. The desired outcomes for this competency include excellence and credibility in decision making.

Service Excellence: Makes customer service a top priority and constantly seeks to improve customer service. Is responsive to changes in what customers want and need. Delivers on promises made to customers and follows up appropriately. The desired outcome for this competency is a strong connection to our customers.

Effective Communications: Able to express ideas in a clear, concise and effective manner, whether speaking or in writing. Uses correct grammar and sentence structure in communications. Is a good listener, even when differing viewpoints are being expressed. Openly shares information and keeps all relevant parties updated. The desired outcome for this competency is strategic unity built on trust.

Interpersonal Relationships: Builds and maintains effective working relationships with others both internally and outside the organization; takes a positive and productive approach to resolving any conflicts which may arise. Exemplifies the commitment to the DNR's core value of respect; to work with people, to understand each other's views and to carry out the public will, maintain integrity, and treat everyone with fairness, compassion and dignity. The desired outcome of this competency is a shared mind set and pool of meaning.

Leadership: Fosters and encourages support from his/her team to accomplish objectives, follow procedures, and accepts suggestions; inspires confidence and respect; motivates people to achieve agency goals and objectives; promotes respect, honesty, integrity, and fairness to all. Enforces standards/rules fairly and consistently and leads with courage. The desired outcomes for this competency are accountability through ownership of the work, staff alignment with agency direction, and full engagement of all employees.